

DOUG MOENCH
DAN DAY
MIKE GUSTOVICH
Present



AZTEC ACIE

IN
BLOODY PULP



DAN DAY
PH

The PENUMBRA

ECLIPSE COMICS • P. O. BOX 199 • GUERNEVILLE, CALIFORNIA 95446

ON THE RACKS



DNAGENTS no. 21
The mercenary group from DNAGENTS no. 1 is back — with Tank as their newest member! "Mind Set" is by Evanier, Schauer and Blyberg.

SABRE no. 13

"The Decadence indoctrination" by Don McGregor & Jose Ortiz continues, as danger lurks on the beach and intrigue brews in Roanoke!



MASKED MAN no. 3
The Architectural Terrorists are back, along with Aphid-Man, in a B.C. Boyer extravaganza called "There Are No Heroes." Plus "Security Man."

STRANGE DAYS no. 3
Paradox versus V.2 Pinhead! Johnny Nemo versus the Sirians! The Drifter versus Death! The mini-series concludes! Milligan, Ewins & McCarthy forever!



CROSSFIRE no. 10
"Cadaver Goes to Hollywood" in this off-beat tale by Mark Evanier and Dan Splegle — as Crossfire hunts the man from a previous century.

DETECTIVES INC 1

The first half of the "Micro-Series" by Don McGregor & Marshall Rogers, in which Ted & Bob face death — & meet a midwife whose lover has been killed.



DETECTIVES INC 2
Just two weeks after issue 1 goes on sale, you'll be able to read the stunning conclusion to this Don McGregor-Marshall Rogers action-adventure!

Have you ever wondered how a newcomer to comics — a production assistant, for example — can rise up through the ranks to the semi-exalted position of Assistant Editor quicker than you can say, "Piece o' cake"?

Well, here's a little story, a moral lesson worthy of Horation Alger, about the day that Sean Deming, Brand-New Production Assistant, proved himself worthy of promotion to the rank of Assistant Editor and All-Around Hero of the Office.

We've been here in our California office almost two years now. The first week we were here, we bought a new photocopy machine. The only trouble was, there was just one three-prong outlet, and people were always tripping over it. That was okay, but when we bought a computer, we had to rig another extension cable to the three-prong outlet.

Now if you ever worked with a computer, you know what happens when somebody trips over the cord and accidentally unplugs you: instant memory wipe-out of everything not stored on the diskette. To avoid accidental disconnection of the computer, we gave it a bright orange cable . . . and we crossed our fingers a lot.

Okay, so here comes Sean, new kid in the office. We show him where the X-acto knives go, and how to put paper in the copier, and all the other diddly little things that make office life so wonderful. And after a couple of days I ask him if he has ever had experience with word-processing, and can he use a computer? "No sweat," he says. (His exact words, I remember them well.) So I give him the big lecture about the orange extension cable and the three-prong outlet, which is way the heck on the other side of a wall, around a corner and behind a Coke machine. He listens and says, "No sweat." (His exact words.)

So I go away and leave him to his fate. He won't find the outlet, or he'll trip over the extension cable and wipe out a dozen paragraphs. I know he will, on account of guys who say, "No sweat" like that are cruisin' for a bruisin'.

But half an hour goes by, and all I hear is the tickety tick of the keyboard and the wrr-chkk of the disk

drive, and nothing's going wrong. I can't believe it. Nobody has tripped over the extension cable. How come?

When I go over for a closer look, I see a sight I am totally unprepared for. Sean has plugged the cord into a three-prong outlet right NEXT to the computer! No horrible orange extension cable through the door, around the corner and behind the Coke machine!

I've never seen that three-prong outlet before in my life!

"Oh, says Sean, looking up most casually as Dean and I stutter and sputter over this miracle, 'I thought it'd be better to plug it in over here. It's closer.'"

B-b-but where did that new three-prong outlet materialize from?

"Piece o' cake," says Sean, "It was right here all along. You guys just must have overlooked it somehow."

And that, folks, is why I predict that Sean Deming is a name you'll be seeing more of soon. (Hint: check out **ALIEN ENCOUNTERS** no. 1, shipping in June.)

catherine yronwode

IN YOUR HANDS

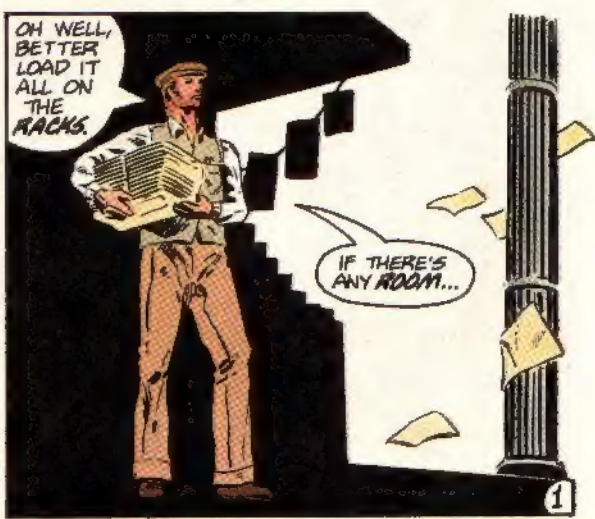
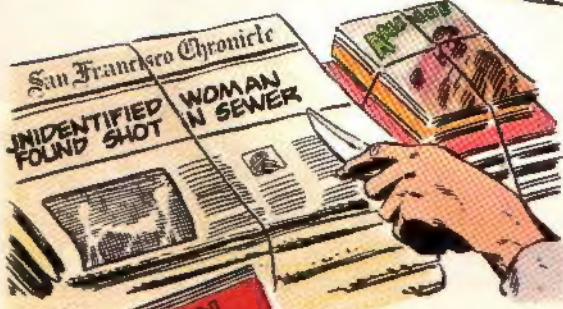
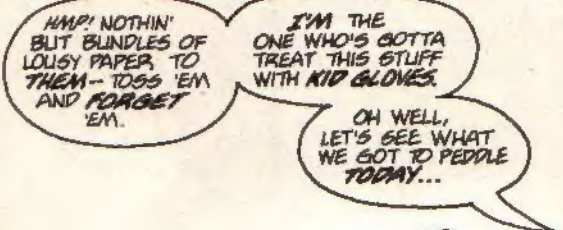
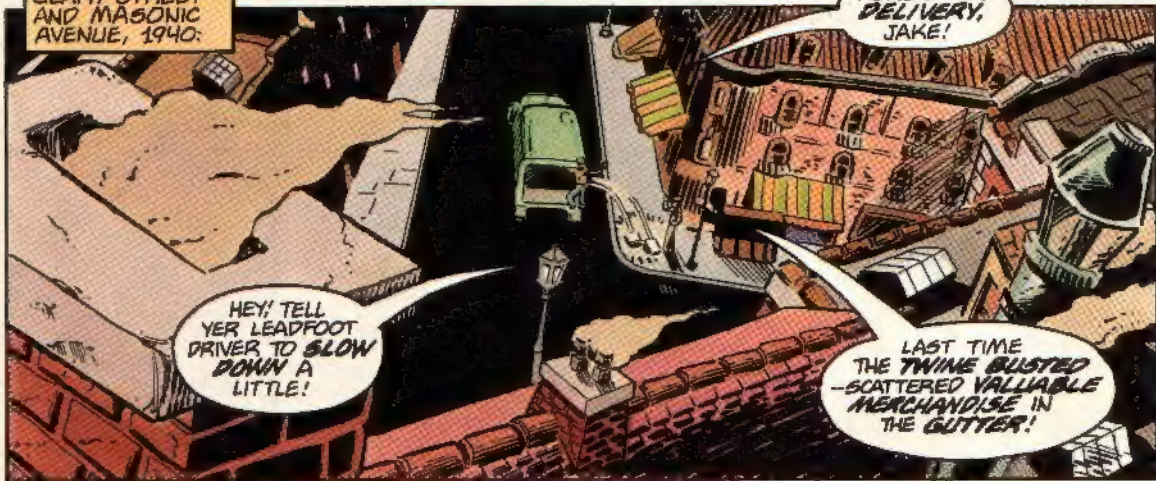
Bridget killed Bridget for the sake of love, but did Time accept her sacrifice? Of all deaths, murder should be the most final, and of all places to die, a sewer the least likely to become a shrine to beauty.

The time — San Francisco. The place — shortly thereafter. The guy in the fedora — not who you think he is. Read on!

"TIME'S A CONFIDENCE TRICK. IT'S LIKE A CROOKED GUARDIAN WHO KEEPS DIPPING HIS HANDS INTO YOUR BANK ACCOUNT. YOU THINK YOU'VE STILL GOT A FORTUNE LEFT, AND THEN YOU REALIZE YOU'RE ON THE EDGE OF BANKRUPTCY." --COLIN WILSON, 1969

HITTING THE STREET

SAN FRANCISCO:
GEARY STREET
AND MASONIC
AVENUE, 1940:



AZTEC AGE

IN

BLOODY PULP

WRITER--
DOUG
MOENCH

PENCILS--
DAN
DAY

INKS--
MIKE
GUSTOVICH

COLORISTS
OLIFF /
DE WALT

LETTERER--
CARRIE
SPIEGLE

EDITOR--
CAT @
IRONWODE



DEATH PHOTOS
ARE NEVER PRETTY--
AND THEY TELL ME
THIS DAME LOOKED A
LOT SWEETER BEFORE
HER PUMP BROKE
DOWN.

EVER SEEN
HER?



NOT LIKE THAT,
I AIN'T--NOT LIKE SOME-
THIN' OUTTA ONE OF
THESE BLOODY
PULPS...

BUT IF THAT'S BRIDGE, I
SEEN HER A LOT--USED TO
STOP HERE NIGHTS FOR
THE LATE EDITION.

USUALLY
WITH
RINALDO.



THE HOOD
RINALDO.

THE SAME
RINALDO WHO'S
CONNECTED WITH
HUGGESS GRIFFITH
AND EVERY
OTHER
CHEAP PUNK
ON THIS SIDE
OF TOWN?



LOOK, COPPER, I MAKE
AN HONEST LIVIN' SELLIN'
THIS CRAP HERE AND I
DON'T ASK NO CUSTOMER
HIS BUSINESS.



UH-HUH.

WHEN'S THE
LAST TIME
YOU SAW
THE DAME?



TWO, THREE
NIGHTS AGO.



NOTICE ANYTHING
FUNNY? WAS SHE
WITH RINALDO?



NAH--WITH A TALL, THIN
GUY, DARK SKIN, ALMOST
LIKE AN INDIAN. NEVER
SEEN HIM BEFORE
NOR SINCE.



AND THEY
DIDN'T MAKE
ME LAUGH.

THINK SOME
MORE, NEWSIE--I
MAY BE BACK.

AND BY THE WAY,
THAT CHRONICLE YOU'RE
PEDDLING IS OUT OF
DATE...



BRIDGET'S BEEN
IDENTIFIED.

WISE-ASS
COPPER.



HEY, JAKE--
SEE YOU GOT
A NEW DELIVERY
OF MY FAVORITE
READING
MATTER...





San Francisco Chronicle

SATURDAY, MAY 11, 1940

UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN FOUND SHOT IN SEWER



SO KROK TOOK THE BABY BORN IN LIMBO, AND IT WAS ALL MY FAULT.

WELL, I MET HER AT THE STAY-SHUN...

SHAKREEN HAD OFFERED THE BLACK-EYED CHERUB TO ME, SAYING IT COULD BE MINE.

BUT I CHOSE TO RESCUE BRIDGET INSTEAD.

AND IN SUCH CHOICES ARE OLD HELLS TRADED FOR NEW.

HEY, ACEY-DELICE, I'VE BEEN THINKING...

YOU KNOW HOW I WAS BLUE ABOUT MY REMOVAL FROM 1940 NOT MESSING UP TIME, FIGURING IT MEANT I WASN'T DESTINED TO DO ANYTHING IMPORTANT--

PLEASE DON'T--

MAYBE IT'S 'CAUSE I'M DESTINED TO HAVE A BABY OUT OF TIME--WITH YOU.

SHEESH, WHAT'D I SAY? YOU'D THINK I WAS ASKIN' THE LUG TO MARRY ME.

--NOT EVEN HAVE A BABY?

NO, BRIDGET, DON'T SAY IT...

RED LIGHT FOR MY BABY...

WEIRD
TALES

LONG
NOSES
OF THE
LAW

MORQUE

HEY, LOU, I
FIGURED THIS IS
WHERE YOU'D BE
--BUT DON'T YOU
REALIZE HOW
COLD THIS
JOINT IS?

SPEND MUCH
LONGER IN HERE
AND THEY'LL PUT
YOU IN ONE OF
THE DRAWERS.

LISTEN,
LOU, I CAN'T BE
SURE WITH HER
FACE LIKE THAT--

--BUT
I JUST
THOUGHT
OF SOME-
THING.

HE CAME OUT
OF A NIGHTCLUB
WITH A DAME ON
HIS ARM--AND IT
MIGHTA BEEN
HER.

IT WAS, FRANK.

ANYWAY, SPEAKIN'
OF RINALDO, WE GOT
WORD THAT MUGGSY
GRIFFITH'S MOVIN' TO
TAKE OVER THE MOB.

HE'S CALLED
A MEET WITH
STICK TERHUNE'S
BOYS.

IF WE SNIFFED
AROUND, MAYBE
WE COULD CRASH
THE MEET-PLACE
AND--

WE'RE ALREADY
ON A CASE, FRANK,
AND WE'RE GONNA
CRACK IT.

YEAH, BUT
RINALDO AND GRIFFITH,
MAYBE EVEN TERHUNE
--THEY MIGHT BE
INVOLVED IN THIS
MURDER...

THAT TIME YOU
HAD ME STAKE OUT
RINALDO?

YEAH?

YEAH? HOW'D
YOU TUMBLE
ON IT?

IT'S AMAZING
WHAT YOU CAN
LEARN AT THE
NEWSSTAND.

LOU, WILL YA STOP
LOOKIN' AT HER LIKE
THAT, FOR CRY-EYE?
YOU'RE GIVIN' ME THE
DEEP CREEPS. LET
HER REST AND LET'S
GET OUTTA HERE,
HUH?



AND LOU, YOU'RE STARTIN' TO WORRY ME.

IT AIN'T HEALTHY TO FEEL THIS WAY ABOUT A DEAD DAME.



SO I'LL ASK YOU AGAIN, LOU-- WHO'S PULLIN' OUR STRINGS? THIS BRIDGET KRONOPOLLOUS TWIST OR THE GRIFFITH AND TERHUNE MOBS?

SHE'S GOTTEN TO ME, FRANK.



SOMETHING ABOUT HER HAS CRAWLED RIGHT UNDER MY SKIN, AS IF THAT SLUG WAS PUT INTO HER BACK WHILE SHE WAS RUNNIN' TO ME FOR HELP.

SHE'S HAUNTING ME.



AH, I THOUGHT I MIGHT FIND YOU BROODING IN HERE, CAZA.

WHAT'S WRONG THIS TIME TO--DEMAND THE SOOTHING TICKS OF THE CHRONOMECH CHAMBER?



NOTHING, TEMPLUS.



JUST HAUNTED BY THE PAST... AND SOMETHING BRIDGET SAID.

I WAS WRONG TO SUSPECT HER, YOU KNOW--AND I'M CONVINCED OF IT NOW--THANK THE ORACLE.



I'VE SUSPECTED SHE WAS CLEAN ALL ALONG, CAZA--NO EBONATI DOUBLE-AGENT WOULD HAVE HAD THE PATIENCE OR RESTRAINT TO ENDURE ALL I'VE PUT HER THROUGH.



I OWE HER A CONFESSION AND AN APOLOGY...

JA, BUT NOT QUITE YET...



...BECAUSE SPEAKING OF OLD FRIENDS LIKE THE ORACLE, WE JUST RECEIVED A SIGNAL FROM TELETEMP UNLIMITED--

--WHICH IS WHY I LEFT MY BOX TO COME LOOKING FOR YOU.

IT SOUNDS BIG.



CLASSIC COMICS
SHERLOCK HOLMES
THE CASE OF THE STOKED MOLARS

NOTHING UP IN RINALDO'S ROOMS, LOU-- HOW ABOUT DOWN HERE IN THE BASEMENT?

A FULL SET OF LOOSE TEETH.

HUH?

SOME BODY SAVED ON THE LANDLORD'S COAL BILL--AND I'M BETTING WE CAN WIPE RINALDO'S NAME OFF OUR SLATE OF SUSPECTS IN THE KRONOPOLLOUS CASE.

LOCATE HIS DENTIST, FRANK, AND MATCH RINALDO'S RECORDS WITH--

BUT LOU, DON'T YOU SEE?



IF IT WAS RINALDO WHO WENT UP IN SMOKE, THEN DOLLARS TO DOUGHNUTS HE AND THE DAME WERE MURDERED BY THE SAME PEOPLE.

AND IF THOSE PEOPLE DON'T BELONG TO THE GRIFFITH OR TERHUNE MOBS, THEN I'LL KISS YOUR--

AH, WISE UP, FRANK.

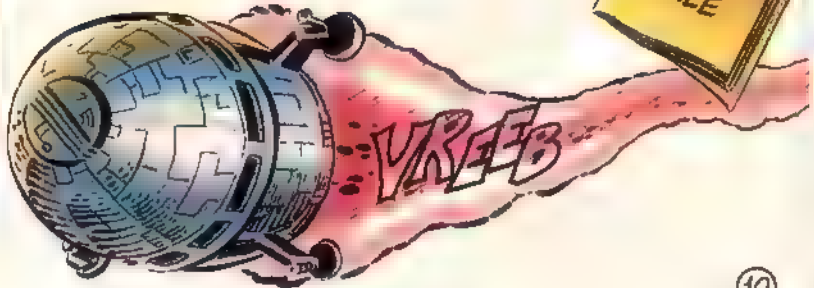
A SEWER AND A FURNACE.

NEITHER ONE FITS THE PROFILE OF A TYPICAL MOB HIT AND YOU KNOW IT.

WE'RE ONTO SOMETHING WEIRD HERE.

HEAD GLIDES US THROUGH THE INVISIBLE MAZE OF THE GOLDEN MELD, COMPRISED OF A VAST AND MIASMIC SPARKLE OF TACHYON GHOSTS FLUXING IN THE FOURTH DIMENSION...

DESTINATION THERE AND THEN! HERE AND NOW.

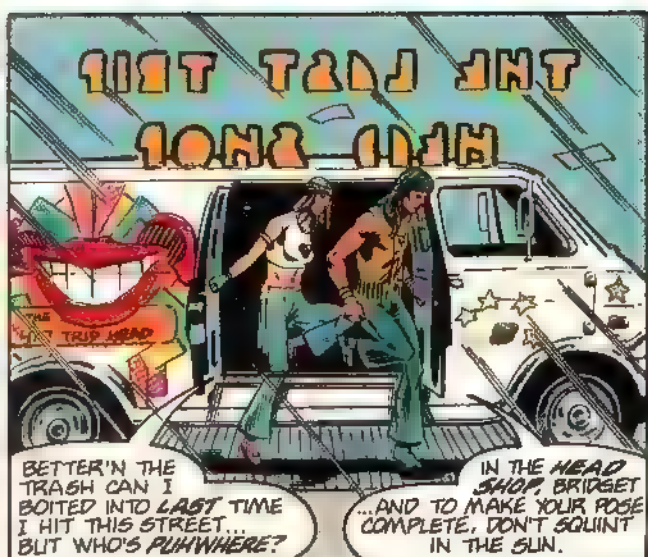


SHIELD
ARTEMIS
DREAMS

SO WHERE'D THE
WOMB FACTOR
STASH US THIS
TIME?

IN PUER'S
VAN ON 23RD
STREET.

BOIT 69T



BETTER'N THE
TRASH CAN I
BOITED INTO LAST TIME
I HIT THIS STREET...
BUT WHO'S PUHWHERE?

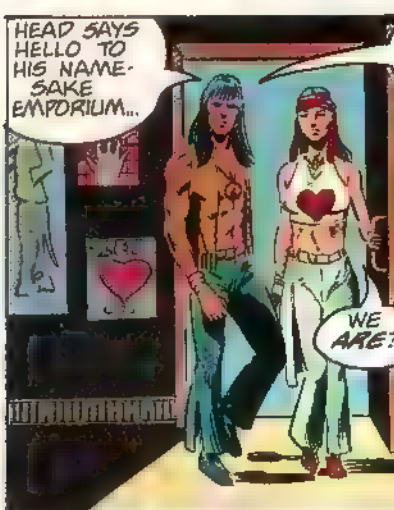
IN THE HEAD
SHOP, BRIDGET
...AND TO MAKE YOUR POSE
COMPLETE, DON'T SQUINT
IN THE SUN.

PEACE,
PUER ARTEMIS--
AND TOO BAD YOU
CAN'T KEEP ON
TRUCKIN'!



HM?

HEAD SAYS
HELLO TO
HIS NAME-
SAKE
EMPORIUM...



WE
ARE?

...AND WE'RE
LOOKING FOR SPACE
AND TIME
UNLIMITED.



THE LAST
TRIP
HEAD SHOP

BRIDGET HERE,
BY THE WAY, IS
STILL UNDER THIRTY.



YEAH...?



PROVE
IT

CALENDAR
-2023-
TRANSCANADA

MY PLEASURE,
PUER.



CALENDAR
-2023-
TRANSCANADA



AND MY
SCRAMBACK
ERADICATES
THE PARA-
DOXICAL
PRESENCE
OF THE
FUTURE



SpooF



TICKLES THE ORBS TO SEE YOU AGAIN, CAZA --AND NOT DOPPELGANGERS.



DOES EVERYONE HAVE TO PEG ME FOR AN EBNATI?

RIGHT NOW PARANOID'S CHEAP FOXY LADY, AND TRUST IS HARD TO COME BY, THESE OR ANY OTHER DAYS.



SO HOW GO THE TIME-WARS, CAZA?

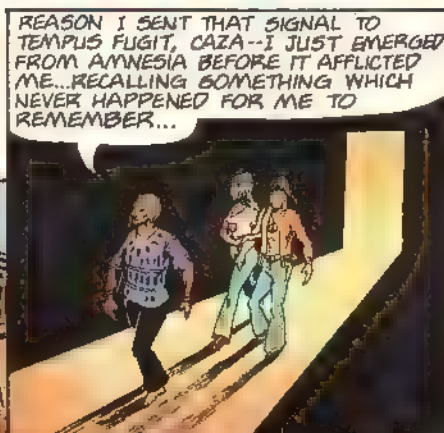
ONE DAY AT A TIME, PUER...

MOMENT TO MOMENT



AND YOU TRIPPED IN FOR A FEW MOMENTS OF THE STRANGE, HUH?

RIGHT UP HERE IN THE BACK ROOM.



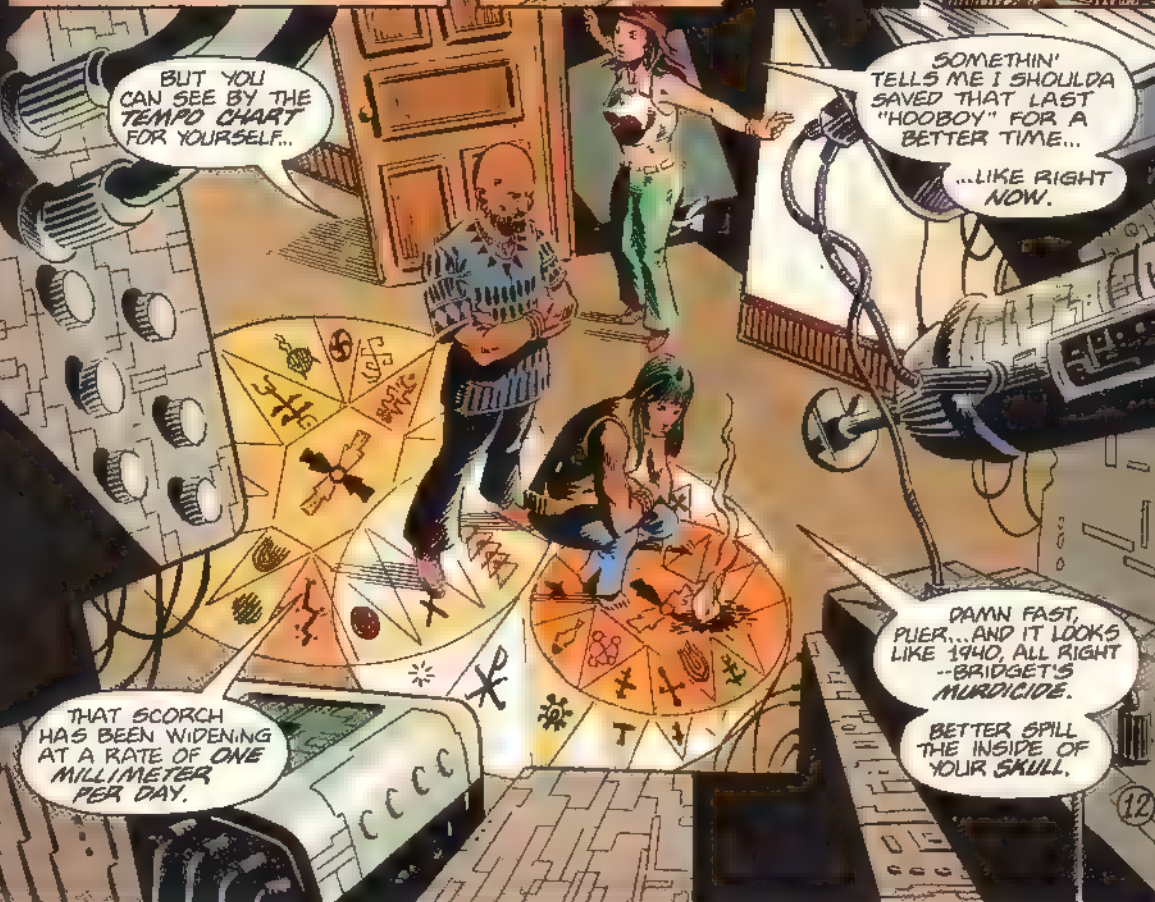
REASON I SENT THAT SIGNAL TO TEMPUS FUGIT, CAZA--I JUST EMERGED FROM AMNESIA BEFORE IT AFFLICTED ME...RECALLING SOMETHING WHICH NEVER HAPPENED FOR ME TO REMEMBER...



.. AND IT LOOKS LIKE BRIDGET HERE IS THE CAUSE OF IT.

TELETEMP UNLTD

HOOBOY.



BUT YOU CAN SEE BY THE TEMPO CHART FOR YOURSELF...

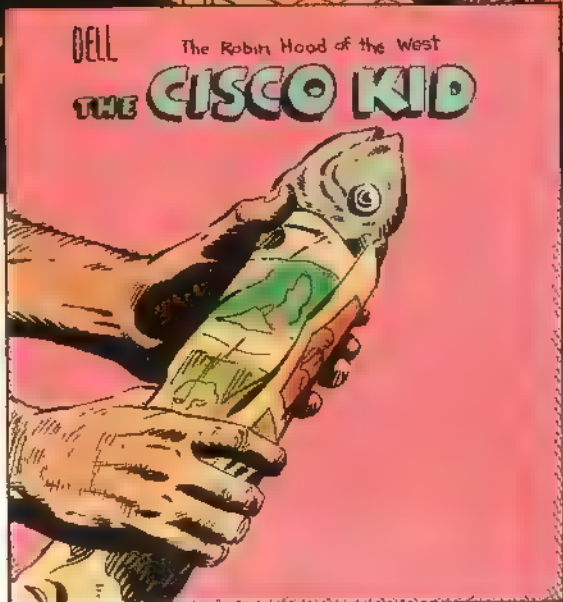
SOMETHIN' TELLS ME I SHOULDA SAVED THAT LAST "HOOBOY" FOR A BETTER TIME...

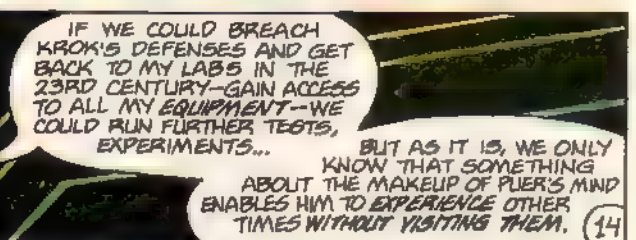
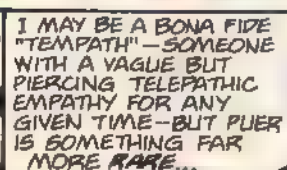
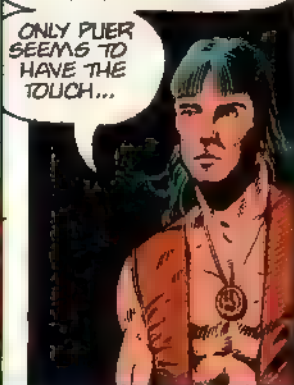
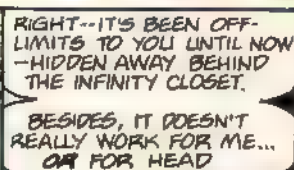
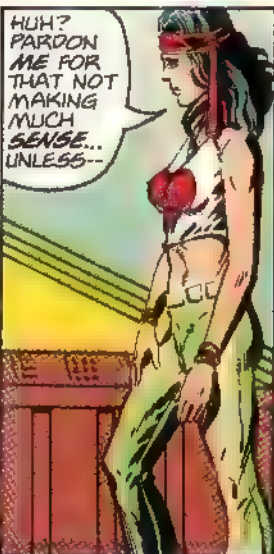
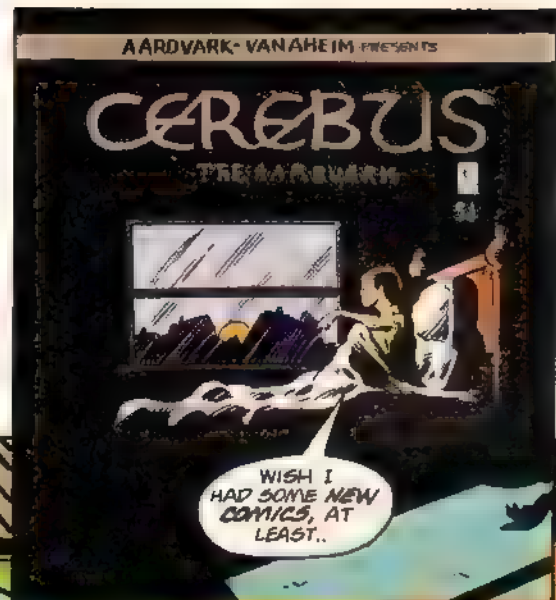
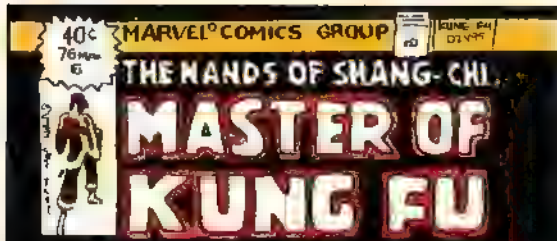
...LIKE RIGHT NOW.

THAT SCORCH HAS BEEN WIDENING AT A RATE OF ONE MILLIMETER PER DAY.

DAMN FAST, PUER...AND IT LOOKS LIKE 1940, ALL RIGHT --BRIDGET'S MURDICE.

BETTER SPILL THE INSIDE OF YOUR SKULL.





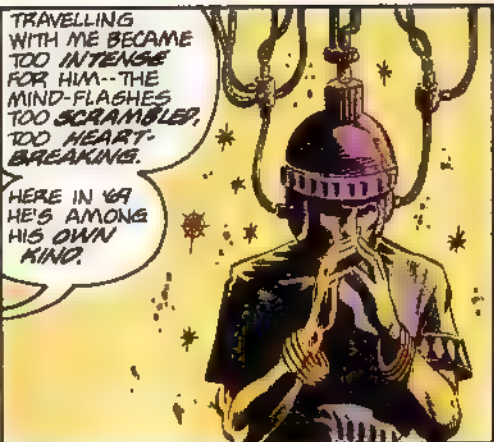
IT WAS THIS ABILITY--OR ABERRATION--WHICH BROUGHT HIM TO MY LABS IN THE DAYS OF MY EARLY, PRE-VEHICLE EXPERIMENTS..

...AND IT'S THE SAME FACTOR WHICH, AFTER KROK'S INVASION OF MY LABS FORCED US TO FLEE PHYSICALLY THROUGH TIME TOGETHER, EVENTUALLY FORCED PUER TO CEASE HIS SHIFTING AND SETTLE HERE IN 1989.

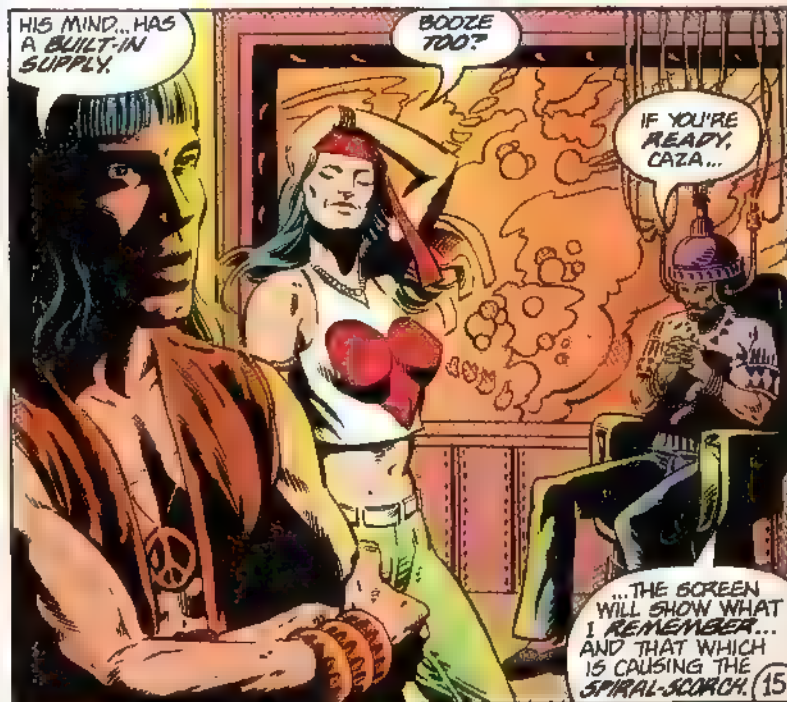


TRAVELLING WITH ME BECAME TOO INTENSE FOR HIM--THE MIND-FLASHES TOO SCRAMBLED, TOO HEART-BREAKING.

HERE IN '89 HE'S AMONG HIS OWN KIND.



THE ONLY DIFFERENCE IS... PUER HAS NEVER TOUCHED LSD--OR ANY OTHER DRUG.



HIS MIND... HAS A BUILT-IN SUPPLY.

BOOZE TOO?

IF YOU'RE READY, CAZA...

...THE SCREEN WILL SHOW WHAT I REMEMBER... AND THAT WHICH IS CAUSING THE SPIRAL-SCORCH. (15)

THIS MEETING BETWEEN MUGGSY GRIFFITH AND STICK TERHUNE IN A 1940 SAN FRANCISCO GARAGE SHOULD HAVE BEEN BROKEN UP IN A POLICE RAID LED BY A DETECTIVE LOU KINSOLVING.

BUT SUCH IS NOT NOW THE CASE...

NOW THAT RINALDO'S TAKEN A POWDER, STICK, I'M TAKING OVER HIS MOB- AND UNLIKE RINALDO, I KNOW WHO THE REAL ENEMY IS.

I PROPOSE WE STOP RUBBING OUT EACH OTHER AND START TAKING AIM ON SOME LEGITIMATE TARGETS

AS AN ACT OF GOOD FAITH, MY BOYS ARE WILLING TO PUT DOWN THAT COPPER KINSOLVING - TONIGHT.

IF YOU LIKE OUR ACT, WE CAN GET TOGETHER AND GET ON WITH THE BUSINESS OF SHARING OUR BUSINESS.

"HAD THIS MEETING BEEN BROKEN UP THE TWO GANGS WOULD CONTINUE AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS-UNTIL, DIVIDED, THEY WOULD FALL."

"BUT KINSOLVING IS SO OBSESSED WITH THE MURDER OF ONE BRIDGET KRONOPOLLOUS THAT IT HAS MADE HIM VERY CARELESS ALL THE WAY UP TO THE BORDER OF THE SCORCH."

AND HIS DERELICT ATTITUDE IS UNLIKELY TO CHANGE, EVEN PAST THE BORDER INTO OPEN TEMPORAIN...

...MAKING HIM EASY PREY FOR MUGGSY GRIFFITH'S MOB - UNLESS SOMEONE PREVENTS IT, AND DOES SO BEFORE THE SCORCH WIDENS A SINGLE MILLIMETER FARTHER.

"IF KINSOLVING'S DEATH IS NOT PREVENTED, THE FOLLOWERS OF STICK TERHUNE WILL JOIN MUGGSY GRIFFITH'S BOYS TO FORM A SINGLE AWESOME MOB"

"...AND SAN FRANCISCO WILL FALL UNDER A REIGN OF TERROR LASTING DECADES, A PERIOD OF DEPREDTION TO MAKE THE ROARING TWENTIES SEEM LIKE A GOLDEN ERA OF HARM-LESS FUN"



YOU'RE RIGHT, PUER-KINSOLVING'S DEATH ~~DOES~~ CAUSE QUITE A GLITCH.

HOWCUM-- IF MY DEATH DIDN'T CAUSE ANY?

AND THAT'S ONLY ONE OF DOZENS, CAZA, EACH BRANCHING INTO DOZENS MORE...



FOR ONE THING, KINSOLVING IS SLATED TO PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE ON THE BEACHES OF NORMANDY--

--AND IF P-DRY GETS FOULED UP WITHOUT HIM...



RIGHT.

AND YOUR PREMATURE DEATH HAS CAUSED A DOXIE-GLITCH, BRIDGET...



HIS DEATH

JUMPERS.



ALL FAMOUS CRIME MONOLOG WITH A CORPSE

ONE LOUSY PHOTO WHILE YOU WERE STILL ALIVE, BRIDGET, AND NOTHIN' ELSE.

YOUR PAST IS A TOTAL BLANK --NO INFO ON YOUR MOTHER OR FATHER AND LESS ON YOU.

SO WHO WERE YOU?



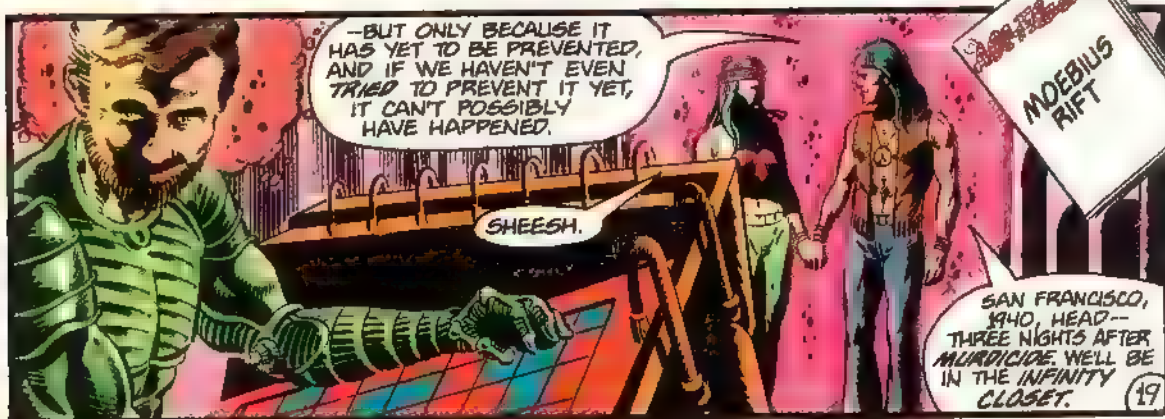
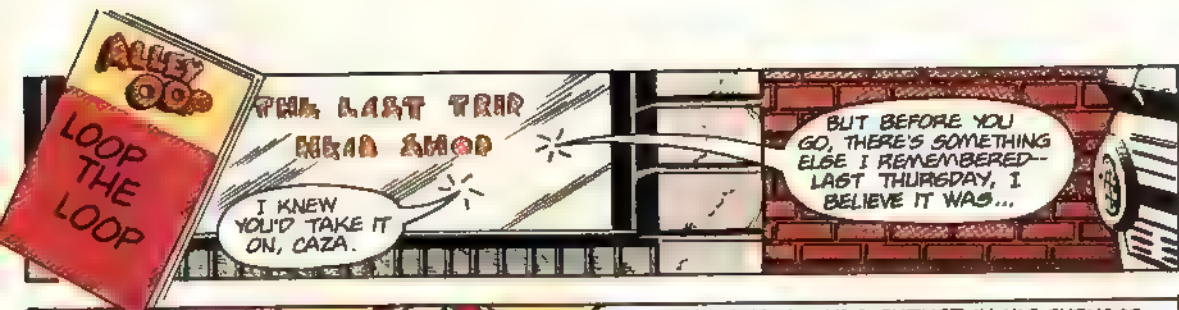
AND WHY DID YOU GET MIXED UP WITH A CHEAP HOOD LIKE RINALDO?

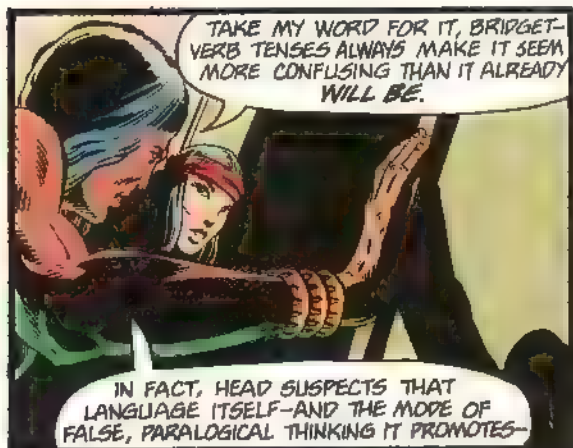
AND WHO BURNED HIM?

NO ANSWERS, BRIDGET, NONE AT ALL...



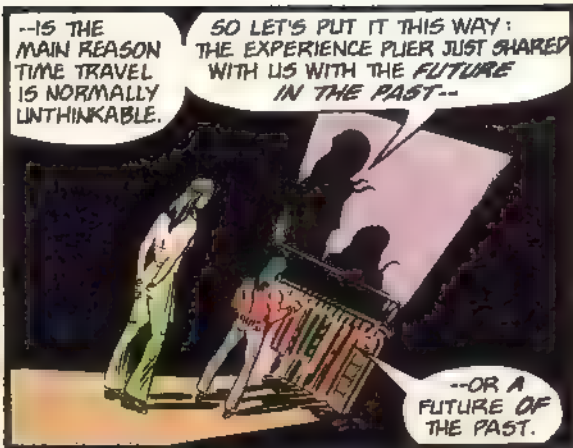
BUT I'LL TELL YOU THIS, BABE...I'M GONNA CHASE YOU-- FOREVER--OR UNTIL I GET THE ANSWERS--STRAIGHT FROM THE LIPS OF YOUR GHOST, IF NEED BE.





TAKE MY WORD FOR IT, BRIDGET-
VERB TENSES ALWAYS MAKE IT SEEM
MORE CONFUSING THAN IT ALREADY
WILL BE.

IN FACT, HEAD SUSPECTS THAT
LANGUAGE ITSELF--AND THE MODE OF
FALSE, PARALOGICAL THINKING IT PROMOTES--



--IS THE
MAIN REASON
TIME TRAVEL
IS NORMALLY
LINTHINKABLE.

SO LET'S PUT IT THIS WAY:
THE EXPERIENCE PUER JUST SHARED
WITH US WITH THE *FUTURE*
IN THE PAST--

--OR A
FUTURE OF
THE PAST.



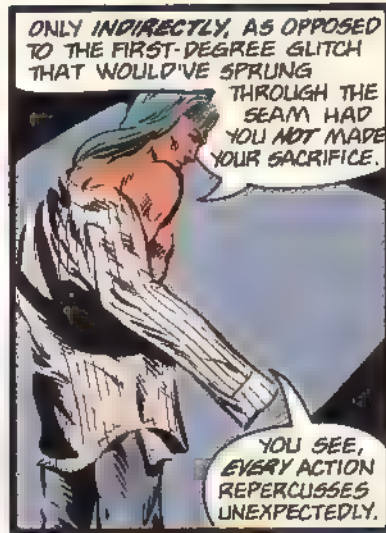
PUT THAT ON--YOU'LL LOOK
LIKE DIETRICH IN DRAG.

MANGLE YOUR
TONGUE ALL YOU
WANT, ACEY-
DELICE--



--BUT YOU AIN'T DRAGGIN' MY
BRAIN INTO IT. THE FACT
REMAINS-- I COMMITTED
MURDICE TO PREVENT A
DOXIE-GLITCH...

...AND
NOW YOU'RE
TELLIN' ME
MY POOR
DEAD
BODY IS
CREATING
ONE.



ONLY INDIRECTLY, AS OPPOSED
TO THE FIRST-DEGREE GLITCH
THAT WOULD'VE SPRUNG

THROUGH THE
SEAM HAD
YOU NOT MADE
YOUR SACRIFICE.

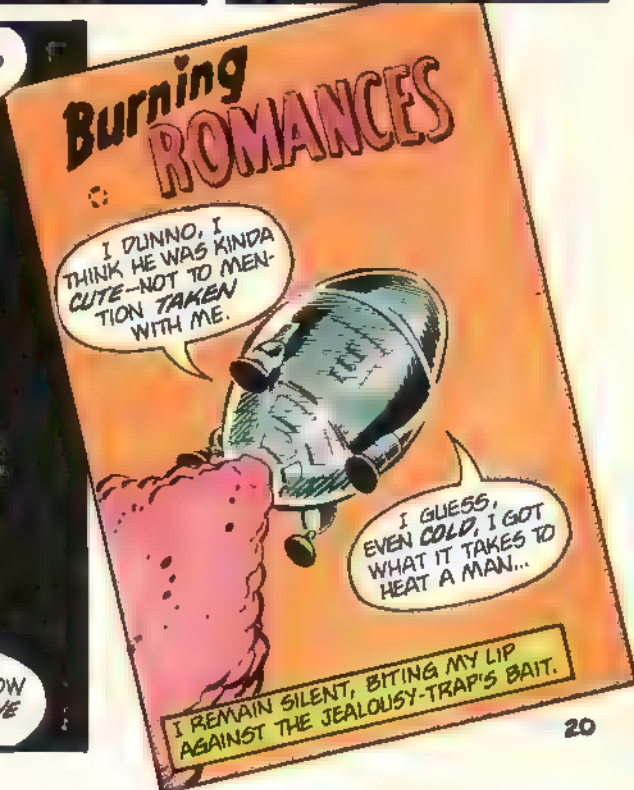
YOU SEE,
EVERY ACTION
REPERCUSSES
UNEXPECTEDLY.



HOW COULD WE ANTICIPATE THAT THE MYSTERY
OF YOUR DEATH WOULD DISTRACT KINSOLVING TO
THE POINT OF VULNERABILITY TO ASSASSINATION?

YOU'RE TAKIN' THE
QUESTIONS RIGHT OUTTA
MY MOUTH, BUT DON'T EXPECT
ME TO RETURN THE FAVOR WITH
ANY ANSWERS.

THE ANSWER IS
WE COULDN'T--AND NOW
WE'VE GOT TO GO *SAVE*
THE PUMB CLUCK.



**Burning
ROMANCES**

I DUNNO, I
THINK HE WAS KINDA
CUTE--NOT TO MEN-
TION TAKEN
WITH ME.

I GUESS,
EVEN COLD, I GOT
WHAT IT TAKES TO
HEAT A MAN...

I REMAIN SILENT, BITING MY LIP
AGAINST THE JEALOUSY-TRAP'S BAIT.

CHALLENGERS THE UNKNOWN

PAINTING PENTIMENTO

SAY, ISN'T
THIS WHERE
I CAME IN?
OR WENT
OUT?

BOIT
BOIT

PRETEND
YOU'VE COME
BACK TO LIFE
ON A DEADLY
MISSION.

ACTUALLY, THE MANHOLE IS
NEAR THE CORNER OF
GEARY AND MASONIC.

SURE, SURE,
BUT AIN'T WE
GOIN' ABOUT THIS
THE HARD WAY?

WHY NOT
GO BACK A
LITTLE EARLIER
AND TAKE THE
GOOD GUY'S
PLACE--

--PLAY KINSOLV-
ING AND BUST UP
THAT MEETING THE
WAY IT SHOULD'VE
BEEN?

TOO LATE--
THAT BIT OF
HISTORY'S ALREADY
SCORCHED.

WE'D ONLY FAIL TIME
AND AGAIN--LIKE I DID WITH
GALILEO'S CAT--AND MAYBE
GET OURSELVES KILLED IN
THAT LOUSY GARAGE.

GET READY,
BOYS--HERE COMES
KINSOLVING IN
HIS CAR...

HOLD IT,
MUGGEBY...

WESTERN UNION
FROM STICK
TERMLINE..

HE SAYS NIX ON
THE MERGER.

AND
KINSOLVING'S
CAR PASSES
SAFELY.

YEAH, YOUSSE
GUYS, AN' DAT GOES
FER ME TOO!

LIKE WE CAN'T
GET OURSELVES KILLED
ON THIS LOUSY ROOF,
ACEY-DUECE?

PATIENCE, BRIDGET
--THEY'LL SCATTER IN
NO TIME.

LIKE THE SHADOW
SAYS, ALL CRIMINALS
ARE COWARDS AT
HEART.

NOW
BLAST
'EM!!

SURE ENOUGH, THE NOTION OF A
ROOFTOP FIREFIGHT--WHEN THE
UNKNOWN OPPOSITION IS AVOIDED
OF CHIMNEY COVER--RUBS MUGGSY
WRONGSIDE RAW...

BUT ONE OF THEM PANICS

BREAK FOR
THE FIRE ESCAPE!
LET'S GET OUTTA
HERE!!

YAAAAHHH

STUMBLES

AND
FALLS.

BULLETMAN

THE FLYING DETECTIVE

THE STREET HITS BACK

HE PULPS HIMSELF
NEAR THE CORNER
NEWSSTAND BELOW.

RISKED OUR
LIVES USING
BLANKS JUST
SO WE WOULDN'T
CREATE A GLITCH
BY KILLING THEM,
AND ONE DIES
ANYWAY.

AT LEAST
WE DIDN'T DO IT
DIRECTLY...

MUGGERS AND THE OTHER
ONE REACH THE SAFETY OF
SHADOWS

AND IF WE
FINISH OUR
WORK
PROPERLY--

--HIS DEATH
WILL BE DESTINED
ANYWAY, ALONG
WITH MOST OF
THE OTHERS.

NOW LET'S
LOAD UP WITH
REAL SLUGS
AND GET OVER
TO GRIFFITH'S
PLACE BEFORE
HE COMES
HOME.

CHAMBER OF
CHILLS
GHOST
OF
ELECTRICITY

RAT-A-TAT-TAT

GUNFIRE,
ACE!

RELAX--IT'S
JUST "GANGBUSTERS"
ON SOME RADIO.

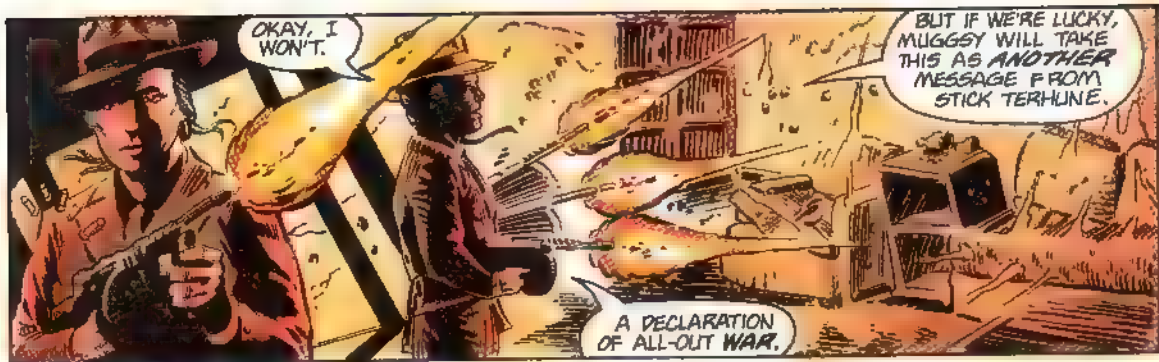
VEEBEEBEEB

KLITCH

NEVER
DID LIKE THAT
PROGRAM--
LISTENED TO
FIBBER AND
MOLLY
INSTEAD.

HM, NOT AS GAUDY AS
RINALDO'S DIGGS WERE, BUT
STILL, WHO SAYS CRIME DOESN'T
PAY FOR THESE MUGS?

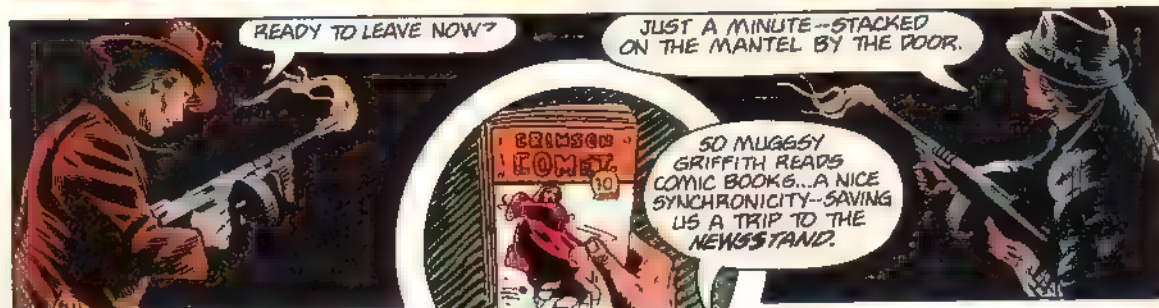
AND DON'T
TELL ME THE
SHADOW.



OKAY, I WON'T.

BUT IF WE'RE LUCKY, MUGGSY WILL TAKE THIS AS **ANOTHER** MESSAGE FROM STICK TERHUNE.

A DECLARATION OF ALL-OUT WAR.



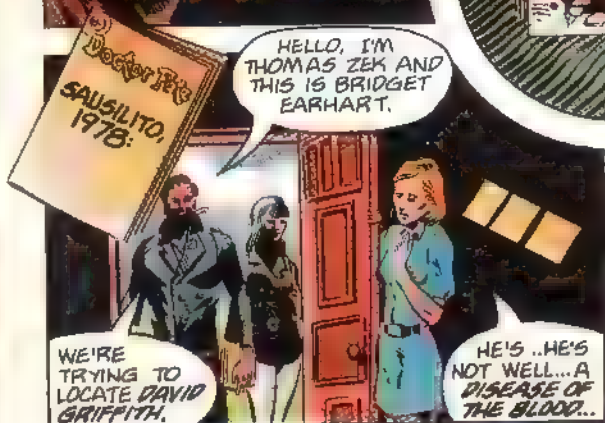
READY TO LEAVE NOW?

JUST A MINUTE--STACKED ON THE MANTEL BY THE DOOR.

SO MUGGSY GRIFFITH READS COMIC BOOKS...A NICE SYNCHRONICITY--SAVING US A TRIP TO THE NEWSSTAND.

I KNOW ABOUT THE **LEUKEMIA**, MRS GRIFFITH

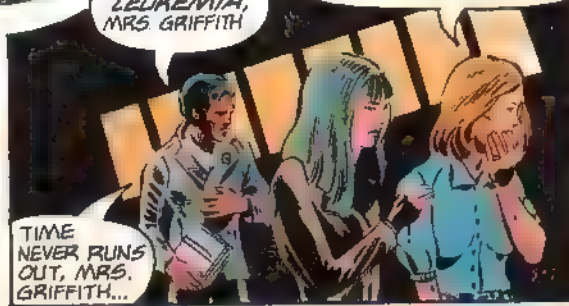
THEN YOU...YOU ALSO KNOW IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE HE.. BEFORE



HELLO, I'M THOMAS ZEK AND THIS IS BRIDGET EARHART.

WE'RE TRYING TO LOCATE DAVID GRIFFITH.

HE'S ..HE'S NOT WELL...A DISEASE OF THE BLOOD...



TIME NEVER RUNS OUT, MRS. GRIFFITH...

...NOT TRULY -- AND EVERY JOURNEY ENDS AT THE BEGINNING.



I... TH-THANK YOU ...BUT WHO--

SOMEONE WHO KNEW DAVID'S **GRANDFATHER**.

BUT...YOU'RE SO YOUNG...



I WAS YOUNGER THEN.

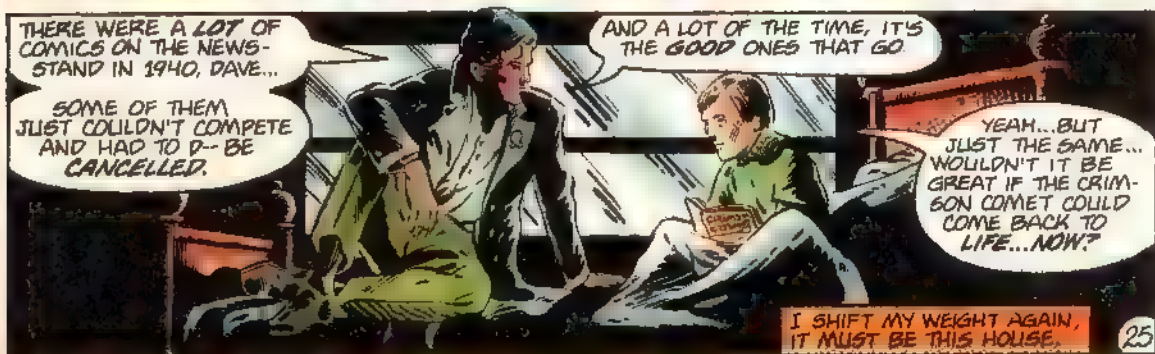
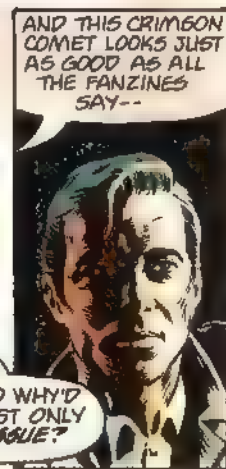
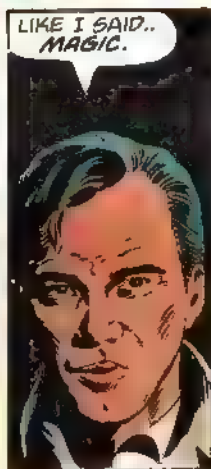
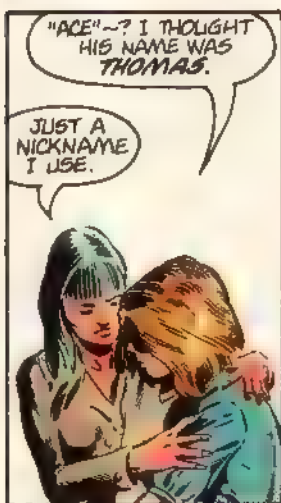
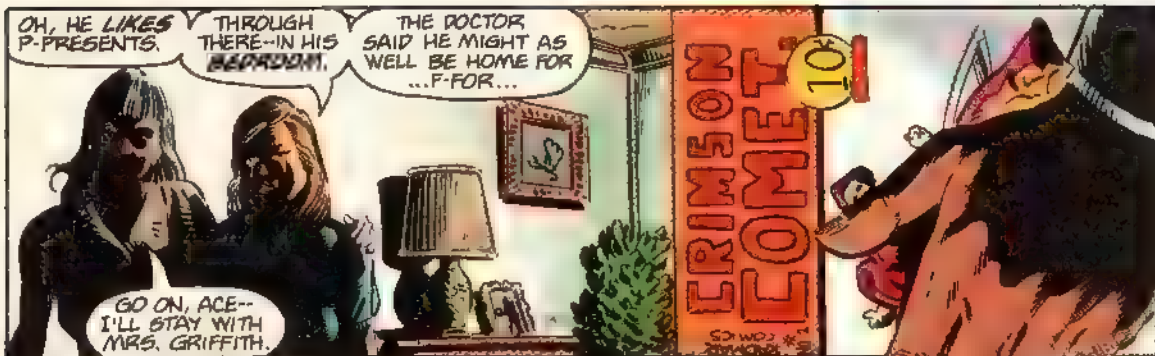
THEY THEY CALLED HIM "MUGGSY." WAS HE REALLY...**BAD?**



I SHIFT MY WEIGHT, SUDDENLY UNCOMFORTABLE



I, AH, BROUGHT SOMETHING FOR DAVID-- THEY BELONGED TO HIS GRANDFATHER.





SO NOW ARE YOU GONNA TELL ME WHAT THAT WAS ALL ABOUT?

JUST TRYING
UP A LITTLE LOOSE
END PUER
MENTIONED.

YOU MEAN THE
DOXIE-GLITCH MIGHT
SOMEHOW ECHO ALL
THE WAY DOWN
THROUGH THREE
GENERATIONS?

NO...IN FACT,
SINCE THE OUT-OF-
TIME PRESENCE OF THE
COMIC BOOKS WILL
EVENTUALLY CREATE A
DIFFERENT GLITCH,
WE'LL HAVE TO COME
BACK AND RETRIEVE
THEM WHEN HE'S...

...WHEN HE'S
DONE WITH THEM.

THEN WHY TAKE THE
TIME AND TROUBLE TO TRACK
DOWN MUGGSY GRIFFITH'S
GRANDSON? JUST TO MAKE
HIM HAPPY FOR A FEW
DAYS--?

THAT'S ENOUGH,
ISN'T IT?

YOU BET--BUT YOU'RE PUSHIN'
YOUR LUCK, PAL. I **ALREADY** LOVE
YOU MORE THAN WHAT'S **POSSIBLE**,
AND IF YOU PUT OUT ANY MORE OF
THIS **GOOD GUY** STUFF FOR NO
REAL REASON...

THERE IS
A REASON.

MUGGSY'S GRANDSON
OR NOT...I DON'T BELIEVE
IN **DISEASES OF THE
BLOOD.**

NOW BEFORE WE
FORGET THAT THIS
MISSION ISN'T OVER
YET--MUGGSY AND
STICK TERHUNE ARE
FAR FROM FINISHED.
YOU KNOW--IT'S TIME
FOR YOU TO BECOME
A **GHOST**, BRIDGET.
A GHOST WHO CAN
CONVINCE LOU KINSOLVING
TO DROP HIS OBSESSION.

JEEZ, BUT THIS
IS A **GREAT**
COMIC.

"THE THING ABOUT WORKING WITH TIME, INSTEAD
OF AGAINST IT...IS THAT IT IS NOT WASTED.
EVEN PAIN COUNTS." URSULA K. LEQUIN, 1974.

CONCLUDED NEXT ISSUE: WHERE IN LOU KINSOLVING
IS HAUNTED BEYOND LOVE...WHILE ACE BECOMES A
GOLDEN AGE SUPERHERO. (HONEST!)





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FATAL ELVISION

AZTEC ACE is a superb book. As we all know, as a topic for some future storyline, and I do mean *future*, how about Elvis Presley? Quoting TV GUIDE of 5 January 1985

"Yet, by 1977, his image had become, next to that of Mickey Mouse, the most widely reproduced in the world . . . and it was as if he had come to take his final reality in celebrity itself, had been wholly translated into film, magnetic tape and television that electronic alter-universe in which he seems to supernaturally and imperishably still dwell among us."

This year witnessed yet another media orgy swirling about E.v.'s on the occasion of his 50th birthday and the record sales continue to mount well past the one billion mark, not to mention booming sales of videocassettes.

The idea of E.v.'s still living by some supernatural means facilitated by the media's fascinating. Are we witnessing the beginning of a new religion proclaiming Elvis a messiah who lived, died, and rose again on TV vinyl and magnetic tape? How long will this go on? Will Elvis still be big in the year 2000, 2010, 2300? Will he be a literary god by 3000? You haven't explored much of AZTEC ACE's future end of his space/time temporain and Elvis wore a huge gold Aztec sundial over a white jumpsuit during his last concert. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Alan Borgh
2466 N. 50th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53210

It means . . . I wish to hell I knew if Dr. Jeffrey MacDonald really did it. (And time out while I go listen to "Mystery Train.")

ME TWO

Without exaggerating, AZTEC ACE is one of the finest titles published by any company. The story lines are intelligent and complex, the characters vividly exciting, the art detailed and consistent . . . perfect for the material portrayed. Comics have a unique potential for literary and artistic achievement beyond the commonly accepted bounds of "pop culture." Synthesized text and illustration can create effects to tell stories and convey themes more effectively than many forms of "high art." ACE comes as close to realizing this potential as CEREBUS and precious few others.

Each issue takes a while to read but is hardly tedious and with each rereading the plot and themes are better understood, more and more details (of which you seem ravenously fond) are revealed, until one is reminded of an Ingmar Bergman film — comprehension and appreciation expanding with each new experience.

For example, it took me three tries to completely tie up

ACE no. 8. I kept looking for the Ebonati to pop up as the cause of everything, but I finally understood the more subtle causes of conflict and was glad I did; I like the idea of a time paradox not obviously caused by Ebonati. Having Ace remember the "correct history" because he was destined to "change it" is a good idea which can solve plot problems in the future.

I loved Bridget's miniskirt and her discovery of the Beatles. Ace's anguish over John Lennon's death was a great touch. "Just stay with the sixties and away from the end of '80 . . . and everything will sound fine."

Head was hilarious, and the hints about his past were intriguing. Please, let's have an origin one of these issues.

Galileo's story was touching, fascinating, and evidently historically accurate. How much research do you do for each issue? I refuse to believe all these facts are kept in your head . . .

By the way, Doug, is it true you live in Pennsylvania?
Robert T. Jeschonek
129 Hostetter Road
Johnston, PA 15904

For the time being (and being *what*, I don't know), in Bucks County.

Research for each issue varies, but since I'm equipped with a notoriously poor memory (and, curiously, *hated* history in school) it's always necessary and I always end up doing much more than I can possibly "use." All of time and all of space is a big ball of wax.

I see here in the margin next to your paragraph about liking the idea of paradoxes-not-directly-initiated-by-the-Ebonati that editor Cat (who conscientiously forwards these letters to me) has scrawled: "Me too!" And the two of ya ain't alone, 'cause I never conceived the Ebonati as an every-issue conflict, although their introduction/semi-origin *has* taken much longer than anticipated — and *still* ain't fully explicated, yet, if ever. (Time gets gooey all over the place, even within the pages of a comic book ostensibly "created" and "controlled" by me.) Nevertheless, and in AA's variety-of-conflict defense, let me point out that Nine-Crocodile's followers hardly constitute a limited group — "Ebonati" being merely a term signifying "alternative human beings and constructs thereof" — with a diverse range of sample specimens thus far including: Krok himself, Shakreen, Nightgaunts, Egyptian gods, standard Shadow Knights, Oriental Shadow Knights, Rinaldo Red-Gaunt, Ben Franklin, a Viking, Jack the Ripper, a Sioux Indian, a Roman soldier, Tezcatlipoca, a dead-eyed baby, and a whacked-out robot . . . among quite a few others. There have also been non-Ebonati "ancillary menaces" such as the berserk Triceratops. Beyond all that, however, no. 7 had nothing to do with the Ebonati, nor, really, did no. 8. The Ebonati presence is strictly confined to the background in weirdo no. 9 and the Dark Boys appear nowhere in this issue or the next. Look out for no. 14, however, wherein the (largely unseen but

nonetheless pivotal) Ebonati again rear a beautiful head to make Cleopatra's life a living hell.

ROAMIN LENNON

While rereading AZTEC ACE no. 8 for what must be the tenth time, I decided I had to write. As Bridget said, a sedate story – but in no way boring. The dialogue, as always is a joy to read, but one line in particular stands out, referring to John Lennon's murder: "There's a certain amount of pain involved." Now if Caza is from the far future it seems to me Lennon's death would be little more than a footnote in the history books. I mean, how much pain do we feel over Mozart's premature death? But if Caza had met John, the pain would indeed be great. And if Nine-Crocodile knew of Caza's love for the Beatles wouldn't it be a cruel plot to send an Ebonati agent to stop Chapman? Caza would be forced to oppose the agent – to ensure that Lennon is murdered.

A strange note: This idea is virtually identical to an episode of *Star Trek* written by Harlan Ellison, and both Harlan and *Star Trek* are mentioned in this issue's lettercol.

A request: Could you write a story featuring James Joyce, Albert Einstein and Aleister Crowley? Robert A. Wilson would love it.

Tom Tesarek
11409 South Oakvale
Minnetonka, MN 55343

Sheesh. After Amelia Earhart, Ambrose Bierce, and Genn Miller, you want me to take on Joyce, Einstein and Crowley??? After that it'd be Charlie Manson, Mother Teresa, and Emmett Kelly, no doubt. Or Frankie Lymon, Tokyo Rose, and Plutarch, I suppose. Maybe Michaelangelo, Queen Victoria, and Cyndi Lauper? Florence Nightingale, Genghis Khan, and Arnold Stang. Then publisher Dean would start screaming for Mel Torme, Willie Mays and Steve Ditko. Editor Cat would insist on seeing Buddy Holly, Raymond Chandler, and a waitress . . .

That does it. Time for a new contest. Send in the triumvirate of supporting characters you'd most like to see defiled in AZTEC ACE and win an autographed full-color feelie hologram of the Neanderthal or Homo Habilis of your choice.

Getting back to Tom T., it's a not-so-amazing (at this point) coincidence how similar the Lennon idea is to the one I recently got after skimming a new book called ROMAN ENGLAND by John Burke. Confused enough? Then onward, to the next communique . . .

KOSMIC K. LES AGAIN

First, Doug, I'm glad to see you working on a book worthy of your talents. *Moon Knight* was and still is one of the most amazing comic books I've ever experienced, and no. 26 should win some kind of award. It was flawless and powerful, and actually succeeded in creating a soundtrack in my mind. I was sorry to see the book go, but when the character got superpowers and started to fight supervillains (after your departure) it lost the characteristics setting it apart from every other mainstream comic on the shelves. If the title hadn't gone by the wayside on its own, I probably would have dropped it from my collection anyway. I don't see much future for adult readers in the mainstream, but maybe I'm just spoiled.

I'm not entirely sure why your readers compare AZTEC ACE with AMERICAN FLAGG; the characters and premise of each are quite separate. The only factor in common is that both are carefully constructed, complex works of art, both employing innovative styles without depending on set rules to advance the story, and both involving heavy-duty mind-work with the imagination of the reader kicked into overdrive instead of resting passively on the back burner. Reading AZTEC ACE or AMERICAN FLAGG is like doing aerobics for the grey matter. They leave me drained but invigorated after each issue.

I was going to ask about the 23s and other coincidences

(fnord.), but now I see all my hunches were true. So instead, I'll close by guessing the truth about Nine-Crocodile. I'd say he looks a bit like Caza behind his mask, and after seeing Bridget simultaneously existing as native-timer and alien timer for that split instant, I'd say that sometime shortly after Caza's invention of the shift-vehicle he was somehow split in two; unable to rejoin the original Caza, the double went on to become Krok. Perhaps he had to be killed so Caza could travel time without creating Doxie-Glitches, but he didn't die, instead, he became marooned in the space-without time of Five-Worlds. Now, in order for Krok to return to a normal time-frame, it has become necessary for him to destroy Caza's timeline. Perhaps the initial split even created one long Doxie-Glitch, which is Caza's (and our) timeline, and Krok's entire purpose is to destroy it and thereby set his own timeline in order. Only then can the twain merge and Krok (again as part of Caza) rejoin the "normal" universe. Hail Ers!

Jan Levy
100 Dodge Place
Port Arthur, TX 77642

Music, music, music. Pretty soon these Bucks County hills will probably come alive . . .

But seriously, folks, three letters about Elvis and John Lennon and now here's some guy from Janis Joplin's hometown bringing up the "scat-music" issue of *Moon Knight* (who, like the other three, is effectively "dead" but living on through the past). Not only that, but this Port Arthur guy comes frighteningly close to my planned "origin" for 9-K. (Hell, so close that I may have to rethink the whole shebang and come up with a new origin – just to keep future things fresh for all you lettercol readers.)

Jan, buddy, if you were born on the 23 of Feb as I was, does this mean I hafta eat my horoscope? And if so, to the tune of what?

DOCTOR WHEN?

Hooray and yahoo!! Our own American time traveler!!! The Brits have the Doctor and we have Caza. Thank you, thank you. I love every issue, from the edge of my seat, and can't wait for the next. Must be a real challenge keeping all your time travel convolutions straight. (Even Dr. Who was witness to three different destructions of Atlantis.)

I know you don't like being compared to the Doctor, but really it is a compliment. You are right – the Doctor has not yet been seen traveling through time, but that was on the show. And it is easier to draw your imagination than to try to film it. The Doc has been seen traveling through time in the monthly mag a few times though. The Who story you must have seen was most likely an earlier story. No, the Doc does not spend a lot of time in the TARDIS. Quite the opposite. He spends a lot of time on the planets below. Like I said before, it is a lot harder to televise someone's imagination. Especially with a fixed income. BBC and Jon-Natahn Turner have really put a lot into the show since he became Producer.

Although I can state some similarities between Caza and the Doc, I also have to say they are refreshingly different. Thank you again for our own American time traveler. By the way, what nationality is Caza anyway??

And give the public an AZTEC ACE T-shirt, PLEASE!
Tristan Poetzl
(No Address Give)

T-shirt, maybe. When? Why, in the future, of course. Will Don Thompson wear one? Well, it's a free country but the shirt will cost.

As for Caza's nationality, Tristan, considering where he's from, he must be a Futurican.

NEXT ISSUE: Should be no. 13 and if it is, it's called "Fading Spirits," wherein Bridget plays a ghost the better to un-haunt police dick Lou Kinsolving, and Ace plays a superhero the better to facilitate a Pulse-Pounding Partial-Action Ish and to combat a disease of the blood. In the meantime, be kind to Tachyons. Doug

Mystery Magazine says:

"Detectives, Inc.

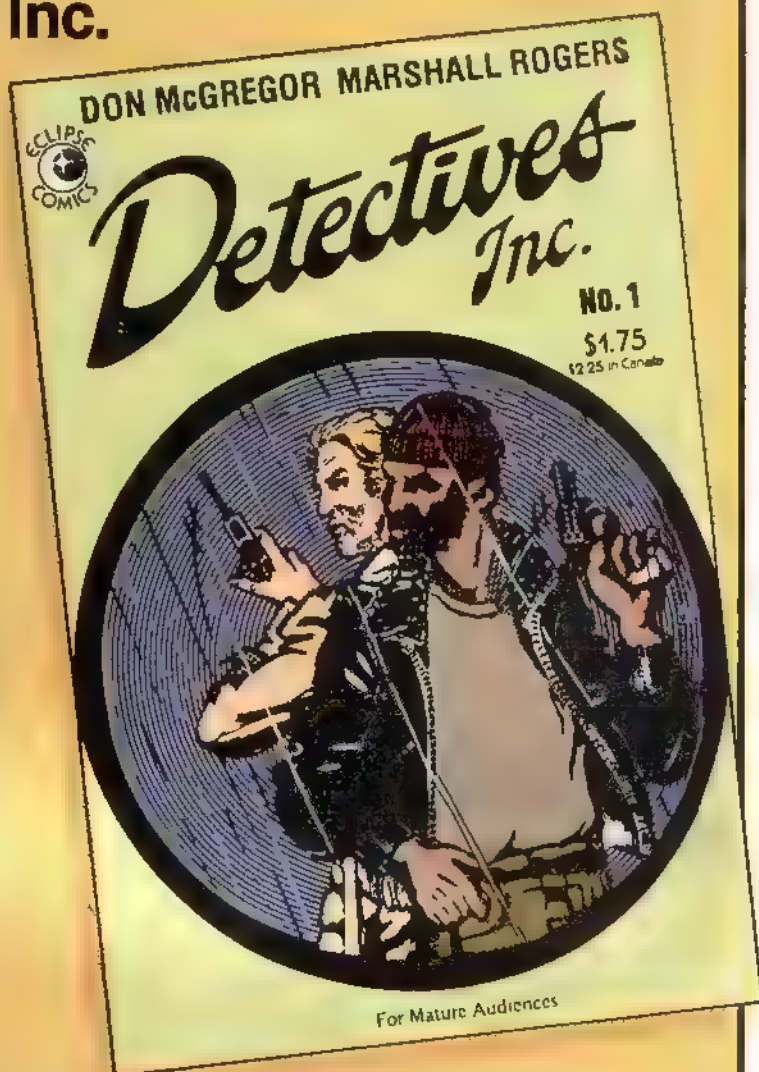
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Howard Zimmerman
Editor/STARLOG Magazine

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